

REMARKS

Initially, the Applicant notes that Claims 3 and 14 have been objected to as being dependent on rejected base claims, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Examiner has rejected claims 8-10, 13, 17-19, and 21-26 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0023993 (hereinafter "Fleischmann"). Furthermore, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-2, 5-7, and 11-12 as being obvious in view of Fleischmann and U.S. Patent 2,455,606 (hereinafter "Pleiss"). Also, the Examiner has rejected claims 4, 15, and 20 as being obvious in view of Fleischmann, Pleiss, and U.S. Patent 4,566,662 (hereinafter "Toshishige"). Finally, the Examiner has rejected claim 16 as being obvious in view of Fleischmann.

Independent claim 1 as amended recites a recess which extends through an accessory post. A snap flange located on a mounting bracket can be engaged from the exterior of the post to release secure attachment of the accessory post and the mounting bracket.

Independent claim 8 as amended recites a snap flange located on an axially extending body portion of a mounting bracket. The snap flange can be received in a recess of an accessory post to facilitate attachment of the accessory post and the mounting bracket. Furthermore, the snap flange is engageable from the exterior of the accessory post to facilitate release of the accessory post from the mounting bracket.

Independent claim 17 as amended recites a snap flange that snaps into a recess to connect a post and a mounting bracket. The snap flange is located on the mounting bracket, the recess is formed through the post, and the snap flange is engageable from the exterior of the post to release the connection of the post to the mounting bracket.

Fleischmann, Pleiss, and Toshishige, either alone or in any combination thereof, fail to disclose or suggest an accessory post having a recess extending therethrough for receiving a snap flange located on a mounting bracket, where the snap flange is provided in the recess to attach the accessory post and the mounting bracket together, and where the snap flange is engageable from the exterior of the accessory post to release the accessory post from the mounting bracket.

As such, independent claims 1, 8, and 17 are believed allowable over the prior art cited by the Examiner. Furthermore, given their dependency on these independent claims, claims 2-5, 7, 11-15, and 18-20 are also believed allowable.

Briefly, regarding independent claim 21, Fleischmann fails to disclose an accessory that is friction fit with a mounting bracket. Fleischmann includes a wall bracket (21) including an elongated cylindrical stem (32). Furthermore, a bolt hole (34) configured to receive a bolt fastener (36) is provided in the elongated cylindrical stem (32). As shown in Fig. 5 of Fleischmann, to attach an escutcheon (40) to the wall bracket (21), the bolt fastener (36) must be provided through the escutcheon (40) into the bolt hole (36). Unlike Fleischmann, the present invention as claimed in claim 21 uses a friction fit between the inner surface of the accessory and the outer surface of the mounting bracket to effectuate attachment. That is, rather than using a separate mechanical fastener such as the bolt fastener (36) of Fleischman, the accessory and the mounting bracket as claimed in claim 21 use a friction fit to effectuate attachment.

As such, independent claim 21 is believed allowable over the prior art cited by the Examiner.

In conclusion, reconsideration by the Examiner and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-5, 7, 8, 11-15, 17-20, and 21 are respectfully requested. Moreover, consideration of and a Notice of Allowance for new claims 27-29 depending from independent claim 21 are also respectfully requested.

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If the Examiner feels that further changes to the application are necessary or if he has any questions regarding the amendments or new claims, he is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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